

Billboard®

Billboard
february 10, 2007
issue



Beatbox

KERRI MASON kmason@billboard.com

Game Face

Louie Vega Hits The Field For Super Bowl Performance

On Super Bowl Sunday, DJ/producer/dance legend **Louie Vega** will take one small step onto the turf and send all of DJ-kind into the end zone.

The 2005 Grammy Award winner and his band, **Elements of Life**, will perform an original soulful house song on the field just prior to the big game between the Indianapolis Colts and the Chicago Bears. Neo-big-top troupe **Cirque du Soleil** is producing the preshow spectacular and commissioned the work especially for it.

"It's a big step for the dance community," Vega says from a plane while he was en route to DJ in Cannes. "We are in awe, proud and honored. Our music can appeal to the masses."

The **Masters at Work** member and MAW Records head co-wrote the eight-and-a-half-minute song

"One Dream" with storied house composer **Blaze**. "[They] really came through with the lyrics," Vega says. "One game, one goal, one dream, one love."

The band submitted the sportsmanlike track in late December. "[Cirque] is very happy with it. So is the NFL," Vega says.

Vega and **Elements of Life** have performed frequently for Cirque events—most notably the opening of Las Vegas shows-in-residence "Ka" and the **Beatles** tribute "Love"—but this is the first time he's been asked to compose.

On game day, Vega will conduct the band and model-esque vocalist **Anané**—also Mrs. Vega—will lead it, while **Cirque's** costumed acrobats and dancers spread their special brand of visual magic across a specially constructed midfield

stage.

Vega says the opportunity to compose for a large-scale performance is "opening a lot of doors. Our music always lent itself to theater, movies, visuals," he says. The DJ recently launched a label with Nervous Records president **Michael Weiss, LnM**, especially devoted to soundtracks. Their first project is a score for "Spit," a docudrama about spoken-word artists written and directed by **Rotimi Rainwater**.

Vega plans to name his upcoming album, slated for a summer release on his own **Vega Records**, after the Super Bowl song. The ever-humble artist relates its unifying theme and shares the thrill of its commission with all his dance music compatriots.

"I'm representing where we all come from, all sorts of dance music, not just soulful," he says. "When it comes to



ELEMENTS OF LIFE

taking it to the next level, I always think that I'm doing this for all of us."

Vega will show more love with the Feb. 20 release of "Mix the Vibe 16: For the Love of King Street," on New York's tiny King Street label. It's the first installment of the long-running compilation series to be mixed live, at Ibiza's Café Mambo with Vega's **Masters at Work** partner **Kenny Dope** providing

on-the-fly effects and singer **Barbara Tucker** ad-libbing over the beats.

KUDOS TO GARRETT: Singer/songwriter **Siedah Garrett**—who topped **Billboard's** Hot Dance Club Play chart in June 1988 with the masterful **Shep Pettibone** remix of the summery soul-pop love song "K.I.S.S.I.N.G."—just snagged a best original song Academy Award nomination.

The old-school diva co-wrote "I Love You I Do" for music's newest grande dame, **Jennifer Hudson**, who belted it out in "Dreamgirls."

The 46-year-old Garrett fronted the **Brand New Heavies** during **N'Dea Davenport's** 10-year hiatus. She also helped pen another ditty you might know: **Michael Jackson's** "Man in the Mirror." ◆◆◆